1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

123 342 We camped on a large wind-swept beach on the Capanaparo and waited there for Landaeta. While waiting I made visits about the country, seeking out Yaruros wherever I could find them. In one nearby group I noticed that unlike most of the Yaruros, these had built permanent shelters, constructed similarly to the houses of the ranchers. However, there was one significant difference. With true Indian logic, they had left the walls open at the bottom, so that the wind could sweep through the house and keep it cool and free from insects.

791 One morning we embarked to visit a group led by Pablo Reyes, being on an island in the Orinoco, at the mouth of the Capanaparo. Pablo Reyes had been described to us as a very old and very wise man. Borrowing a small dugout, we set out to visit him, traveling mostly by night. On our way we saw and heard a great deal of [311] animal and bird life, for the lower part of the river was less hunted by the Yaruros than the upper part. On the banks we saw numerous tracks of the cats, we saw many capibaros or "chiguires" and we were often serenaded by the roar of the howlers.

133 Our entrance into the Orinoco was dramatic. We were catapulted out of the swift waters of the mouth of the Capanaparo and staggered about among the powerful cross currents and eddies at the confluence of the two rivers. The east wind made travel no easier, as it was blowing a gale. On the far side of the Orinoco were the hills of Guiana, rough and jagged, with gnarled vegetation, and dark patches of jungle growth. There were several islands of odd shape, and one of them, about halfway across the Orinoco, was the Linda Bara, to which we made our way.

177 Encamped on this island we found Pablo Reyes' band and a number of "Racionales," that is, "civilized," Venezuelans of the llanos, who during the dry season take to living like the Indians, except that they clutter their shelters with civilized equipment. The result is that their houses are infested with parasites of all kinds. However, they too live upon crocodiles, turtles, and the eggs of the latter.

311 237 This portion of the Orinoco is, in late March and early April, the gathering ground of both Indians and Racionales. The region teems with turtles. By common agreement, stretches of the beaches where the turtles are known to gather in large numbers are not hunted until April, at which time the people dig up thousands and thousands of newly laid eggs out of which they make an oil for export. The [438] center for this commerce is the little settlement of La Urbana, originally a Capuchin mission established about 1750.

791 Like Landaeta, Pablo Reyes had also learned of my coming, and was ready for me. He too is a shaman, and delights in speaking to a sympathetic listener about religious themes, of his conception of

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not allowed to the neighboring peoples, such as the Otomacos or the Achaguas. The social and linguistic bonds seem to be strong enough to cause the Yaruros to recognize themselves as a distinct people.

FOODS

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In the llanos food is not plentiful except in and along the rivers; but the foraging activities of the Yaruros are restricted to the banks of the Capanaparo and Sinaruco Rivers for another reason. The hunting of land animals has practically stopped for fear that they will be accused by the ranchers of killing cattle. In recent years the activities of the crocodile hunters have ruthlessly destroyed the game, and since such hunters live on the country they have consumed a portion of the available quantity of game on which the Yaruros depended for a livelihood.

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In the dry season game is concentrated along the rivers and the water holes. It is considerably easier to hunt it then than in the rainy season, when it is dispersed over the plains. The turtle, which is found in great quantities in the waters of the Orinoco and its tributaries, suffers a yearly mass hunt and destruction which has its effect on the food supply of the Yaruros. It has been discovered that the turtle fat and eggs will produce a fine grade of oil which sells for a high price. The result is that the breeding grounds of the turtles become yearly a scene of great activity and destruction. No one knows how many thousands of turtles and turtle eggs are gathered and converted into this oil late in the month of April.

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The meat staple of the Yaruros is the *Crocodilus babu*, a small crocodile which grows to about 6 feet long. This animal is hunted daily and eaten in its entirety. Its meat is esteemed above that of any other animal. On the other hand, the cayman, sought for its hide, is not hunted as a rule by the Yaruros. Perhaps this meat is not as savory as that of the babu, but the Yaruros give the reason that the large crocodile represents a race of mankind to which they are related. So that although occasionally it may be hunted for the price that its hide may bring, it is never eaten and never hunted consistently.

[825]

Next to the crocodile, turtles, including the matamata and tortoise, are to be found broiling over the fires in every Yaruro camp, and if they are not broiling they can be seen in shallow pools of water with their forelegs tied to their hindlegs. In this way they can keep alive but cannot walk away. The armadillo is seldom obtained and other meats appear occasionally on the diet of the Yaruros. Fishing is resorted to when neither crocodiles nor turtles are obtainable. The caribe, which is the piranha of Brazil, is esteemed but little. The tonino, which can be seen gracefully playing in the water or can be heard snorting in the rivers at night, is never hunted. It also is

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1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

bow and arrows, digging sticks, baskets, small hammocks, a water jar or two, a mortar and pestle, several fishhooks, fire sticks, and scraps of clothing. As a rule, each family will possess the minimum of these objects.

CANOES.—A typical Yaruro canoe measured about 18 feet long. Its longitudinal cross section was as shown in plate 16, *3*. It was made of the "salao" wood.

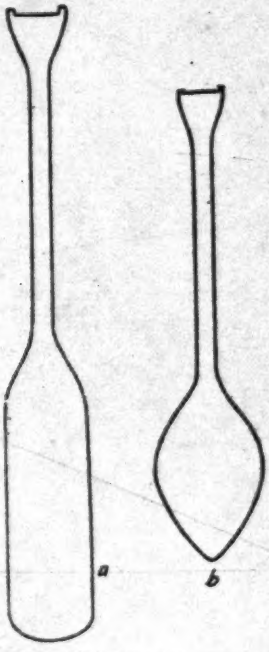

FIGURE 16.—Paddles. *a*, Type usually used by stern paddler. *b*, Generally used in the bow.

The only tools that the Yaruros have to fashion such a canoe are crude machetes, perhaps an ax, and fire. The canoes are never regular in outline and on the whole are rather crude. Both bow and stern end in a point and the bottom is round. These canoes are unstable, difficult to maneuver, and will split easily. No crosspieces are used to reinforce the canoe.

PADDLES.—Paddles are of two types, as shown in figure 16. The large paddles measure about 4 feet in length; the smaller paddles slightly over 3 feet. They are as crudely fashioned as the canoes and increase the difficulties of paddling.

BOWS.—The bows are fashioned from macanilla or the mahaguillo wood. A large bow will measure about 6 feet, but most of them are closer to 5 feet. The inner surface of the bow is generally flat and the outer is curved. The greatest width on one such bow was about 1½ inches and its thickness less than 1 inch. When the string is relaxed these bows are perfectly straight. They are not reinforced unless they show signs of splitting. On the whole, these bows are inferior to those made by many other tribes in South America. The bow string is tied as shown in figure 17, *e*, *f*, *g*,[1] with three clove-hitch knots.

ARROWS.—The Yaruros, like most other South American primitives, have a variety of arrows, each type being designed for a specific purpose. A fish arrow consists of a reed shaft to which is attached a bone point with resin and string. Often the upper end of the bone point will protrude away from the shaft to form a small barb. Three feathers are used and fastened as shown in figure 18, *f*, *j*, *k*.[2] At the feathers' end of the arrow a notched piece of Brazil-wood is inserted.

A somewhat similar arrow with an iron point is made. In this case the point is inserted into a worked piece of wood which, in turn,

1 [See category 116, p. 205. --- Analyst]
2 [See category 116, p. 206. --- Analyst]

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

411 226 237 is inserted into the reed shaft (fig. 19, *a*, *f*). The barb on the iron point is obviously more effective than on the bone point.

225 For crocodiles the arrow point is always of iron, barbed and detachable. Its length is considerably less than the other, measuring about 4 feet or less. A string about 30 feet long is attached to the point and wrapped tightly around the shaft. When the point strikes the animal the string becomes unwound and if the animal dives into the water the hunter can trace it by the shaft floating on the surface. He then proceeds to pull up the animal.

411 224 For deer and chiguire, land animals, a broad iron blade is used for the point, so heavy that one would suppose it would be a lance head. This is inserted into the shaft and at the point of insertion a crosspiece is fashioned to the shaft so that the point cannot penetrate more than 4 or 5 inches. The reason for this is that the Yaruro is afraid to lose his arrow should he fail to kill the animal and it were to run away. A barbless arrow will tend to fall out of the wound if the animal races away and then the hunter can recover it.

411 223 For birds, the bone-pointed arrows are used and sometimes a special arrow consisting of a shaft with a wooden knob. However, since birds are hunted so seldom there is very little use for special arrows.

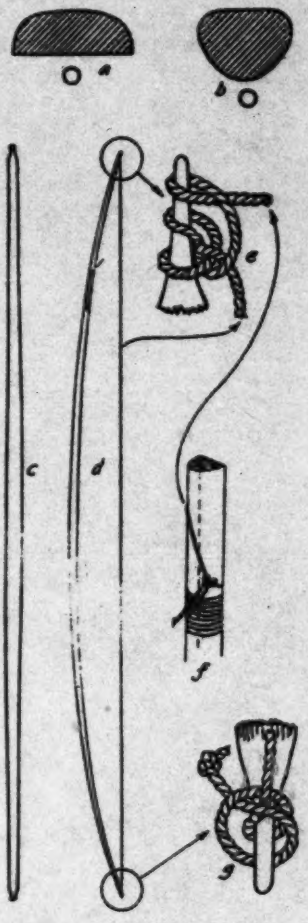

FIGURE 17. — Yaruro bows. *a*, *b*, Cross sections of bows. Circles represent original shape of wood, measuring about 7 cm before it is cut down to shape "*a*" and "*b*." *c*, *d*, Yaruro bow. One specimen measured 195 cm in length, 3.2 cm wide in cross section, 2 cm in thickness. *e*, *f*, *g*, Detail of knots on bow string.

411 326 412 The iron points are well made. Each man tries to possess himself of a stone and an iron hammer, but actually in the entire group that I saw, there were only two stones and one hammer. Iron is hard to obtain, and any scrap which comes into their possession is employed either as a knife or an arrow point. The iron is shaped both by hammering and by filing. I saw only one file in the group. At best, it must cause them a great deal of labor to fashion any of these points.

1 [see category 116, 207 --- Analyst]

Yaruro	Spanish	English	Location and Techniques	Season of Prod. S d-m	F a	W m-s	S o-n	Division of Labor Prod. M	Prod. F	Food M	Prep. F	Q
pa'be	cotua	duck species	rivers, caños, arrows	≠≠	≠	≠	≠	≠≠		?	?	2?
pou'nâ	pato	duck species	doubtful if hunted on Cinaruco)									
MISCELLANEOUS MATERIALS COLLECTED FOR USE IN PRODUCTION:												
ya'ro	capuruna	leaf to wrap and store corn sticks	savana, picking			≠			≠		≠	1
karam'ba	?	cigar wrapping	savana, picking	≠	≠	≠	≠	≠ ?		≠	≠	1
ngam'bi	tabaco	tobacco	savana, picking	≠	≠	≠	≠	≠	≠	≠	≠	1
u'de	curagua, macanilla	macanilla palm	near caños (?) a) for bows, b) for string, fibres for objects	≠ ≠	≠ ≠	≠ ≠	≠ ≠	≠ ≠		≠ ≠ ≠ ≠	≠ ≠	2 2
chara't'o	anlau (salado?)	canoe wood (?)	montes, for making canoes	≠	≠	≠	≠	≠ ≠		≠ ≠		4
citô't'o	caña brava	cane for arrows	near caños for foreshafts	≠	≠	≠	≠	≠ ≠		≠ ≠		4-
tu	moriche	moriche	near or in caños, used for making house roofs, baskets, cords, fibres, hammocks	≠ ≠	≠ ≠	≠ ≠	≠ ≠	≠ ≠ ≠	≠ ≠	≠ ≠ ≠	≠ ≠ ≠	5
ago	moriche frond	ditto	as above, often picked up from ground, or tree cut and fronds collected, last for years, may be reused.		as above							
biri't'o-i	guasca	bark strips	montes, caños, for lashing	≠	≠	≠	≠	≠ ≠		≠ ≠		3
ê-im'bu	cera de abeja	beeswax	near caños, from large trees	≠	≠			≠		≠		1
ê-'ke	miel	honey	as above	≠	≠			≠				-
e'ra	peramán	tree wax	as above? for arrows	≠ ?	≠ ?			≠		≠		2

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[p.87]